

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT General Staff Instructions for  
the Protection of Border Areas

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SUPPLEMENT TO  
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1. Plan for protection and security of frontiers

- a. The Czechoslovak General Staff has been working since 1946 on the creation of a plan for the protection and security of frontiers, known as ZPU (Zajisteni Pohraničního Uzemi). This plan is designed to establish a watch and defense system along the frontier and border areas which, in its final stage, would be able to resist the violation of Czech territory by foreign illegal or military units until further defense measures could be carried out through the mobilization of the Czech Army.
- b. The ZPU plan relies on the civilian population of the border territory as well as on natural and artificial defenses, armed units of the SNB and the Army. The reconnaissance screen (first and second lines of defense) is manned by SNB units, the actual defense line (third line of defense) by military units from border garrisons. Border defenses include:
- 1) Natural defenses, mountains, woods, lakes and rivers, marshes and villages.
  - 2) Entrenchments, barricades, anti-tank ditches and minefields along important lines.
  - 3) A system of destruction of bridges, roads, and embankments designed to delay the advance of motorized and tank units.
  - 4) Re-establishment of the 1938 fortification system of Czechoslovakia.
- c. These plans were issued by the General Staff about the end of 1947 in the form of secret instructions to all border divisions, regiments, and battalions of the SNB with orders to prepare detailed plans of action in accordance with them. Each copy of the instructions was numbered and was printed in a copybook, 30 by 20 cm. in dimensions, and about 100 pages long. The instructions list the objectives of each individual unit of the SNB in each stage of preparedness of the ZPU. They include a syllabus for the elaboration of the ZPU plan and give orders for the control of ZPU preparations.

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2. Summary of ZPU instructions

a. Stage of ZPU preparedness:

- 1) Normal disposition of SNB units
- 2) Alarm
- 3) Reinforced protection of the border territory
- 4) Total protection of the border territory

b. Organizations participating in the ZPU plan:

- 1) SNB border units
- 2) Army
- 3) Permanent SNB stations in the custom zone
- 4) Employees of the forest management
- 5) Possible future use of civilian branches, probably militia

c. The ZPU plan is to be carried out in the custom zone having a depth of about 10 to 15 km from the frontier.

d. Organization of SNB border units under a central organization in the Ministry of the Interior which is in close cooperation with the Ministry of Defense and Staff 1 of the General Staff (ZPU):

- 1) The largest unit, the regiment, is composed as follows:  
Each regiment contains 2-5 battalions  
Each battalion contains 2-7 companies  
Each company contains 3-6 platoons  
Each platoon contains 3 sections of 10 men
- 2) In addition to infantry companies, some battalions contain a cavalry platoon of 3 sections of 8 men each for use in wooded areas.
- 3) Platoon commanders are usually SNB warrant officers (vrchni strazmistro).

e. Armament of the SNB border units consists of light machine guns, sub-machine guns, hand grenades, rifles and pistols.

f. Transportation facilities include cars for the use of battalion and regiment commanders and buses, motorcycles and bicycles for the movement of company and platoon units.

g. SNB border units are located in villages and advantageous communication centers of the custom zone. Headquarters of the SNB border companies are centered among their platoons, usually in a platoon garrison and in a convenient communications center if possible.

h. In order to facilitate cooperation and command, the zones of the SNB border units coincide with those of Army border units. Thus, the zone of the SNB border regiment coincides with that of the Army division, the zone of the SNB border company with that of the infantry battalion, and so on.

i. The basic unit of the ZPU plan is the SNB border platoon. A platoon commander is responsible for the disposition of all ZPU units in his zone and for each ZPU stage of preparedness. Each platoon zone represents a border guard center.

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- j. Telephone communications between platoon commanders must be maintained at all times. Switchboards are to be manned at all times, and military units are responsible for aiding the SNB units in the maintenance of communications within and between SNB units.
3. Stage 1 of ZPU preparedness, normal disposition
- a. Activity of SNB border units:
- 1) SNB border units guard the frontiers either by patrols of two men armed with sub-machine guns or from watchtowers by telescope. The patrols follow a procedure prescribed by the border platoon commanders in agreement with their zone company commander. They start patrol from the garrison to frontier and back, covering about 10 to 20 km. Important frontier crossings are constantly guarded.
  - 2) Permanent SNB stations in the custom zone cooperate with the SNB border units in covering communications in the vicinity of their station. They are forbidden to leave the zone of their station.
- b. Activity of military border units:
- These units train in or near their garrisons and are ready at all times to render immediate assistance to the SNB units on the request of the SNB platoon commander. Means of transportation and ammunition must be ready for immediate use at all times.
- c. Passwords:
- Fixed uniform custom zone passwords are used by both SNB and Army border units. They are issued one month in advance by the SNB commander (ZPU groups).
4. Stage 2 of ZPU preparedness, alarm
- a. Activity of SNB border units:
- Immediately upon declaration of the alarm, SNB border units man observation posts located in favorable positions close to the frontier and form small reserve units for defense (2nd line of defense). The instructions lay particular stress on the rapid destruction of any hostile groups which may already have penetrated the frontier. Destruction rather than mere repulsion of such groups is the policy of all military groups.
- b. Activity of military border units:
- In accordance with the ZPU plan, military border units:
- 1) Remain in readiness for action and remain in close contact with the SNB border unit commanding officer in their zone.
  - 2) Intervene in cooperation with the SNB on request of the SNB unit commander or on their own initiative.
  - 3) Advance into advantageous positions in their zone.
  - 4) Cover certain lines to prevent penetration by stronger hostile forces.
- c. During the alarm switchboards must be constantly manned at all headquarters including border division headquarters and civilian post telephone exchange.
- d. If during any stage of ZPU preparedness, the military units must be sent into action, the military commander of the zone concerned will take command of all branches of the ZPU organization in his zone.

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5. Stage 3 of ZPU preparedness, reinforced protection of the border territory

a. Stage 3 (abbreviated ZZPU) and stage 4 (abbreviated UZPU) of ZPU preparedness are declared by codeword by the Ministry of National Defense General Staff, S-1 section. ZZPU and UZPU are to be declared in case of serious danger to the integrity of the state frontiers - concentration of large hostile forces near the frontiers - or in case of actual penetration of the frontier. In case of extreme emergency the border division commander is authorized to declare ZZPU or UZPU for his zone. He must then inform the Ministry of National Defense General Staff, S-1 section immediately.

## b. Activity of the SNB border units:

After declaration of ZZPU, the SNB border units carry out the same plan as during the alarm, that is, they man the first and second lines of defense.

## c. Activity of military border units:

In accordance with the ZPU plan, military border units:

- 1) Destroy the hostile forces and send military aid on request of the SNB unit commander.
- 2) Cover important lines in their zone.
- 3) Occupy advantageous positions to prevent further penetration.

A line of defense has been anticipated deep in the custom zone which makes use of the former concrete fortresses ('ropiky') which have been in readiness since 1946.

6. Stage 4 of ZPU preparedness, total protection of the border territory

Stage 4 of the ZPU plan has not been planned in detail as yet. The General Staff has been considering it since 1947 under the guidance of Colonel of the General Staff Krupicka.

7. Mobilization plans

The plans for the various ZPU preparedness stages are worked out with the realization that mobilization plans may interfere with their operation. Enough men must remain in garrison during these stages to effect the mobilization if necessary. Mobilized forces are then sent as reinforcements for the border units. Plans for the various stages of preparedness are prepared in such a way that each successive stage may follow closely on the preceding one, culminating in stage 4, i.e., total protection of the border territory.

8. The ZPU plan for each unit shall include the following:

- a. All instructions dealing with ZPU matters.
- b. Map of the border zone of the unit drawn to a medium scale (1:75,000) indicating:
  - 1) Custom zone
  - 2) Headquarters of the SNB border companies and battalions
  - 3) Location of all SNB platoons
  - 4) Location of all SNB border cavalry troops
  - 5) Location of military units participating in the ZPU
  - 6) Defense line

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- c. Communication system
- d. Supply system including:
  - 1) Ammunition and food supply
  - 2) Plan for evacuation
  - 3) Means of transport
- e. Intelligence system
- f. Security measures
- g. Moral education plan
- h. Engineering system
- i. Operation scheme for individual ZPU stages
- j. Plan for military assistance to SNB border platoons
- k. Codewords for establishment of each ZPU stage